

Lecture Notes 6

Random Processes

- Definition and Simple Examples
- Important Classes of Random Processes
 - IID
 - Random Walk Process
 - Markov Processes
 - Independent Increment Processes
 - Counting processes and Poisson Process
- Mean and Autocorrelation Function
- Gaussian Random Processes
 - Gauss–Markov Process

Random Process

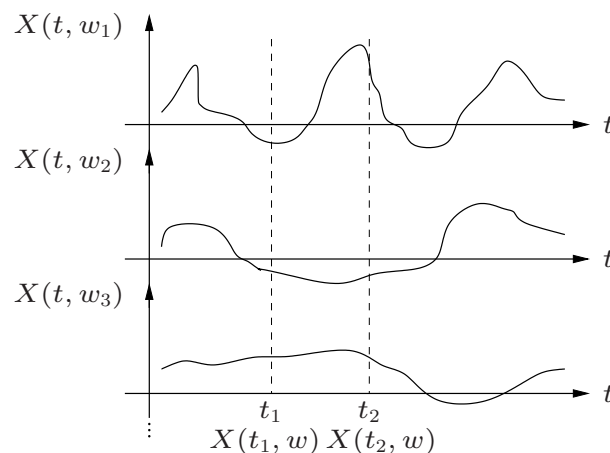
- A *random process* (RP) (or *stochastic process*) is an infinite indexed collection of random variables $\{X(t) : t \in \mathcal{T}\}$, defined over a common probability space
- The index parameter t is typically time, but can also be a spatial dimension
- Random processes are used to model random experiments that evolve in time:
 - Received sequence/waveform at the output of a communication channel
 - Packet arrival times at a node in a communication network
 - Thermal noise in a resistor
 - Scores of an NBA team in consecutive games
 - Daily price of a stock
 - Winnings or losses of a gambler

Questions Involving Random Processes

- Dependencies of the random variables of the process
 - How do future received values depend on past received values?
 - How do future prices of a stock depend on its past values?
- Long term averages
 - What is the proportion of time a queue is empty?
 - What is the average noise power at the output of a circuit?
- Extreme or boundary events
 - What is the probability that a link in a communication network is congested?
 - What is the probability that the maximum power in a power distribution line is exceeded?
 - What is the probability that a gambler will lose all his capital?
- Estimation/detection of a signal from a noisy waveform

Two Ways to View a Random Process

- A random process can be viewed as a function $X(t, \omega)$ of two variables, time $t \in \mathcal{T}$ and the outcome of the underlying random experiment $\omega \in \Omega$
 - For fixed t , $X(t, \omega)$ is a random variable over Ω
 - For fixed ω , $X(t, \omega)$ is a deterministic function of t , called a *sample function*

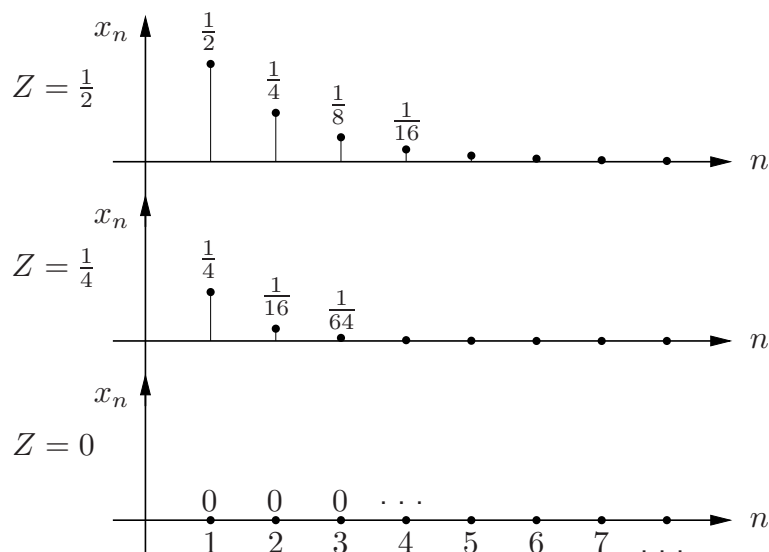


Discrete Time Random Process

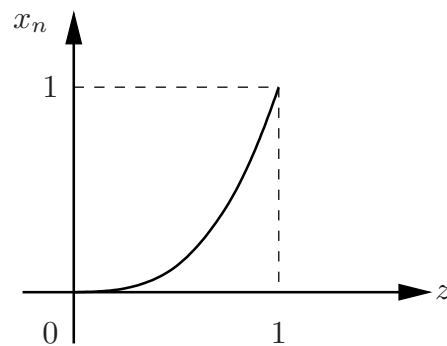
- A random process is said to be *discrete time* if \mathcal{T} is a countably infinite set, e.g.,
 - $\mathcal{N} = \{0, 1, 2, \dots\}$
 - $\mathbf{Z} = \{\dots, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, \dots\}$
- In this case the process is denoted by X_n , for $n \in \mathcal{N}$, a countably infinite set, and is simply an infinite sequence of random variables
- A sample function for a discrete time process is called a *sample sequence* or *sample path*
- A discrete-time process can comprise discrete, continuous, or mixed r.v.s

Example

- Let $Z \sim \mathcal{U}[0, 1]$, and define the discrete time process $X_n = Z^n$ for $n \geq 1$
- Sample paths:



- *First-order pdf of the process*: For each n , $X_n = Z^n$ is a r.v.; the sequence of pdfs of X_n is called the *first-order pdf* of the process



Since X_n is a differentiable function of the continuous r.v. Z , we can find its pdf as

$$f_{X_n}(x) = \frac{1}{nx^{(n-1)/n}} = \frac{1}{n} x^{\frac{1}{n}-1}, \quad 0 \leq x \leq 1$$

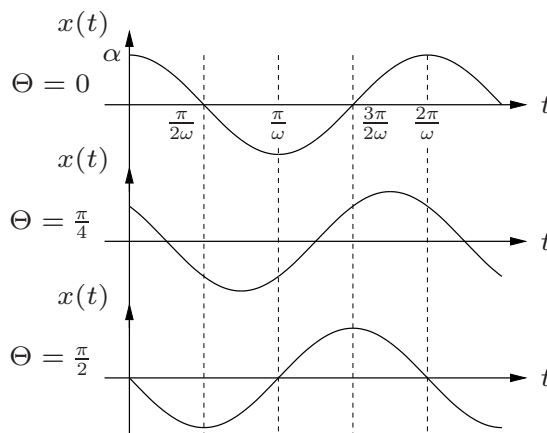
Continuous Time Random Process

- A random process is *continuous time* if \mathcal{T} is a continuous set
- Example: *Sinusoidal Signal with Random Phase*

$$X(t) = \alpha \cos(\omega t + \Theta), \quad t \geq 0$$

where $\Theta \sim \mathcal{U}[0, 2\pi]$ and α and ω are constants

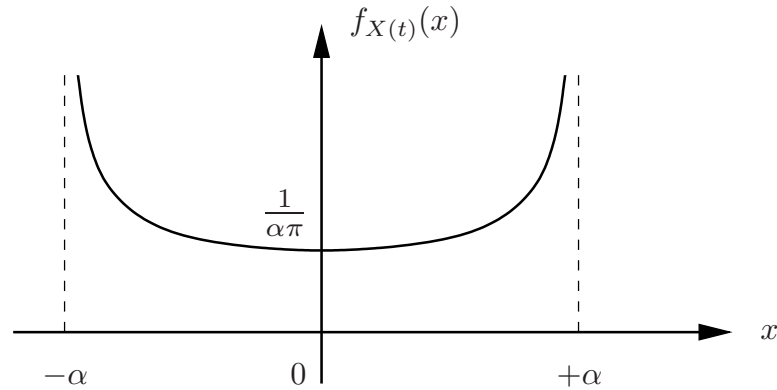
- Sample functions:



- The first-order pdf of the process is the pdf of $X(t) = \alpha \cos(\omega t + \Theta)$. In an earlier homework exercise, we found it to be

$$f_{X(t)}(x) = \frac{1}{\alpha\pi\sqrt{1 - (x/\alpha)^2}}, \quad -\alpha < x < +\alpha$$

The graph of the pdf is shown below



Note that the pdf is independent of t . (The process is *stationary*)

Specifying a Random Process

- In the above examples we specified the random process by describing the set of sample functions (sequences, paths) and explicitly providing a probability measure over the set of events (subsets of sample functions)
- This way of specifying a random process has very limited applicability, and is suited only for very simple processes
- A random process is typically specified (directly or indirectly) by specifying all its n -th order cdfs (pdfs, pmfs), i.e., the joint cdf (pdf, pmf) of the samples

$$X(t_1), X(t_2), \dots, X(t_n)$$

for every order n and for every set of n points $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n \in \mathcal{T}$

- The following examples of important random processes will be specified (directly or indirectly) in this manner

Important Classes of Random Processes

- IID process: $\{X_n : n \in \mathcal{N}\}$ is an IID process if the r.v.s X_n are i.i.d.
Examples:
 - Bernoulli process: $X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n, \dots$ i.i.d. $\sim \text{Bern}(p)$
 - Discrete-time white Gaussian noise (WGN): X_1, \dots, X_n, \dots i.i.d. $\sim \mathcal{N}(0, N)$
- Here we specified the n -th order pmfs (pdfs) of the processes by specifying the first-order pmf (pdf) and stating that the r.v.s are independent
- It would be quite difficult to provide the specifications for an IID process by specifying the probability measure over the subsets of the sample space

The Random Walk Process

- Let $Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_n, \dots$ be i.i.d., where

$$Z_n = \begin{cases} +1 & \text{with probability } \frac{1}{2} \\ -1 & \text{with probability } \frac{1}{2} \end{cases}$$

- The *random walk process* is defined by

$$X_0 = 0$$

$$X_n = \sum_{i=1}^n Z_i, \quad n \geq 1$$

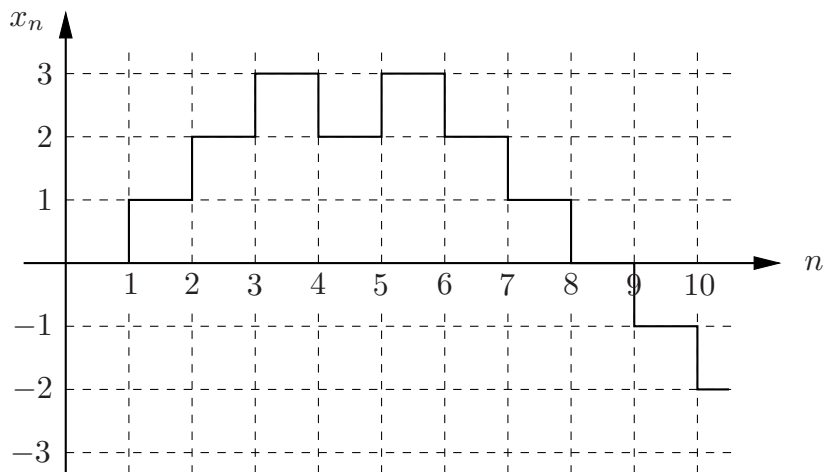
- Again this process is specified by (indirectly) specifying all n -th order pmfs
- Sample path: The sample path for a random walk is a sequence of integers, e.g.,

$$0, +1, 0, -1, -2, -3, -4, \dots$$

or

$$0, +1, +2, +3, +4, +3, +4, +3, +4, \dots$$

Example:



$$z_n : \quad 1 \quad 1 \quad 1 \quad -1 \quad 1 \quad -1 \quad -1 \quad -1 \quad -1 \quad -1$$

- First-order pmf: The first-order pmf is $P\{X_n = k\}$ as a function of n . Note that

$$k \in \{-n, -(n-2), \dots, -2, 0, +2, \dots, +(n-2), +n\} \quad \text{for } n \text{ even}$$

$$k \in \{-n, -(n-2), \dots, -1, +1, +3, \dots, +(n-2), +n\} \quad \text{for } n \text{ odd}$$

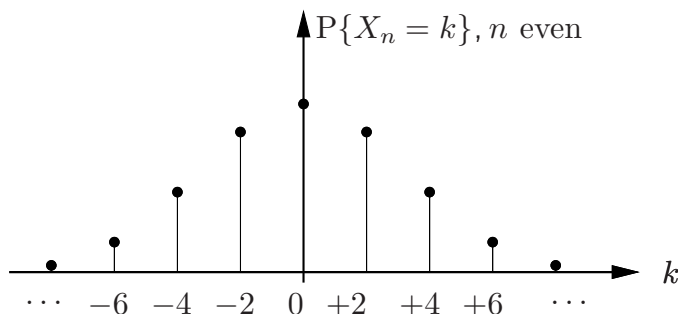
Hence, $P\{X_n = k\} = 0$ if $n + k$ is odd, or if $k < -n$ or $k > n$

Now for $n + k$ even, let a be the number of $+1$'s in n steps, then the number of -1 's is $n - a$, and we find that

$$k = a - (n - a) = 2a - n \Rightarrow a = \frac{n + k}{2}$$

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} P\{X_n = k\} &= P\{\frac{1}{2}(n + k) \text{ heads in } n \text{ independent coin tosses}\} \\ &= \binom{n}{\frac{n+k}{2}} \cdot 2^{-n} \quad \text{for } n + k \text{ even and } -n \leq k \leq n \end{aligned}$$



Markov Processes

- A discrete-time random process X_n is said to be a Markov process if the *process future and past are conditionally independent given its present value*
- Mathematically this can be rephrased in several ways. For example, if the r.v.s $\{X_n : n \geq 1\}$ are discrete, then the process is Markov iff

$$p_{X_{n+1}|\mathbf{X}^n}(x_{n+1}|x_n, \mathbf{x}^{n-1}) = p_{X_{n+1}|X_n}(x_{n+1}|x_n)$$

for every n

- IID processes are Markov
- The random walk process is Markov. To see this consider

$$\begin{aligned} P\{X_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | \mathbf{X}^n = \mathbf{x}^n\} &= P\{X_n + Z_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | \mathbf{X}^n = \mathbf{x}^n\} \\ &= P\{X_n + Z_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | X_n = x_n\} \\ &= P\{X_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | X_n = x_n\} \end{aligned}$$

Independent Increment Processes

- A discrete-time random process $\{X_n : n \geq 0\}$ is said to be *independent increment* if the *increment* random variables

$$X_{n_1}, X_{n_2} - X_{n_1}, \dots, X_{n_k} - X_{n_{k-1}}$$

are independent for all sequences of indices such that $n_1 < n_2 < \dots < n_k$

- Example: Random walk is an independent increment process because

$$X_{n_1} = \sum_{i=1}^{n_1} Z_i, \quad X_{n_2} - X_{n_1} = \sum_{i=n_1+1}^{n_2} Z_i, \quad \dots, \quad X_{n_k} - X_{n_{k-1}} = \sum_{i=n_{k-1}+1}^{n_k} Z_i$$

are independent because they are functions of independent random vectors

- The independent increment property makes it easy to find the n -th order pmfs of a random walk process from knowledge only of the first-order pmf

- Example: Find $P\{X_5 = 3, X_{10} = 6, X_{20} = 10\}$ for random walk process $\{X_n\}$

Solution: We use the independent increment property as follows

$$\begin{aligned} P\{X_5 = 3, X_{10} = 6, X_{20} = 10\} &= P\{X_5 = 3, X_{10} - X_5 = 3, X_{20} - X_{10} = 4\} \\ &= P\{X_5 = 3\}P\{X_{10} - X_5 = 3\}P\{X_{20} - X_{10} = 4\} \\ &= \binom{5}{4}2^{-5}\binom{5}{4}2^{-5}\binom{10}{7}2^{-10} = 3000 \cdot 2^{-20} \end{aligned}$$

- In general if a process is independent increment, then it is also Markov. To see this let X_n be an independent increment process and define

$$\Delta \mathbf{X}^n = [X_1, X_2 - X_1, \dots, X_n - X_{n-1}]^T$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} p_{X_{n+1}|\mathbf{X}^n}(x_{n+1} | \mathbf{x}^n) &= P\{X_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | \mathbf{X}^n = \mathbf{x}^n\} \\ &= P\{X_{n+1} - X_n + X_n = x_{n+1} | \Delta \mathbf{X}^n = \Delta \mathbf{x}^n, X_n = x_n\} \\ &= P\{X_{n+1} = x_{n+1} | X_n = x_n\} \end{aligned}$$

- The converse is not necessarily true, e.g., IID processes are Markov but not independent increment

- The independent increment property can be extended to continuous-time processes:

A process $X(t)$, $t \geq 0$, is said to be independent increment if $X(t_1)$, $X(t_2) - X(t_1)$, \dots , $X(t_k) - X(t_{k-1})$ are independent for every $0 \leq t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_k$ and every $k \geq 2$

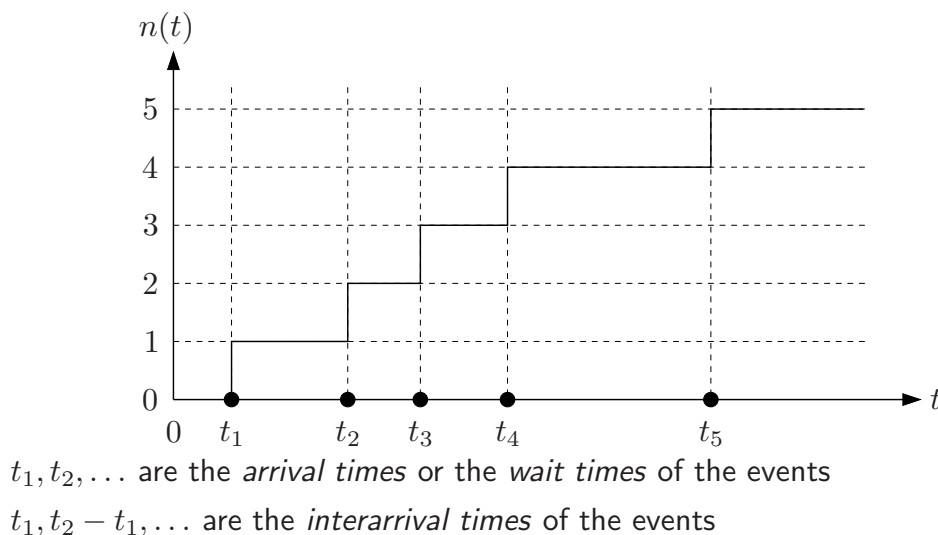
- Markovity can also be extended to continuous-time processes:

A process $X(t)$ is said to be Markov if $X(t_{k+1})$ and $(X(t_1), \dots, X(t_{k-1}))$ are conditionally independent given $X(t_k)$ for every $0 \leq t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_k < t_{k+1}$ and every $k \geq 3$

Counting Processes and Poisson Process

- A continuous-time random process $N(t)$, $t \geq 0$, is said to be a *counting process* if $N(0) = 0$ and $N(t) = n$, $n \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots\}$, is the number of events from 0 to t (hence $N(t_2) \geq N(t_1)$ for every $t_2 > t_1 \geq 0$)

Sample path of a counting process:



The events may be:

- Photon arrivals at an optical detector
- Packet arrivals at a router
- Student arrivals at a class
- The Poisson process is a counting process in which the events are “independent of each other”
- More precisely, $N(t)$ is a Poisson process with rate (intensity) $\lambda > 0$ if:
 - $N(0) = 0$
 - $N(t)$ is independent increment
 - $(N(t_2) - N(t_1)) \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda(t_2 - t_1))$ for all $t_2 > t_1 \geq 0$
- To find the k th order pmf, we use the independent increment property

$$\begin{aligned}
 &P\{N(t_1) = n_1, N(t_2) = n_2, \dots, N(t_k) = n_k\} \\
 &= P\{N(t_1) = n_1, N(t_2) - N(t_1) = n_2 - n_1, \dots, N(t_k) - N(t_{k-1}) = n_k - n_{k-1}\} \\
 &= p_{N(t_1)}(n_1) p_{N(t_2) - N(t_1)}(n_2 - n_1) \dots p_{N(t_k) - N(t_{k-1})}(n_k - n_{k-1})
 \end{aligned}$$

- **Example:** Packets arrive at a router according to a Poisson process $N(t)$ with rate λ . Assume the service time for each packet $T \sim \text{Exp}(\beta)$ is independent of $N(t)$ and of each other. What is the probability that k packets arrive during a service time?
- **Merging:** The sum of independent Poisson process is Poisson. This is a consequence of the infinite divisibility of the Poisson r.v.
- **Branching:** Let $N(t)$ be a Poisson process with rate λ . We split $N(t)$ into two counting subprocesses $N_1(t)$ and $N_2(t)$ such that $N(t) = N_1(t) + N_2(t)$ as follows:
 Each event is randomly and independently assigned to process $N_1(t)$ with probability p , otherwise it is assigned to $N_2(t)$
 Then $N_1(t)$ is a Poisson process with rate $p\lambda$ and $N_2(t)$ is a Poisson process with rate $(1 - p)\lambda$
 This can be generalized to splitting a Poisson process into more than two processes

Related Processes

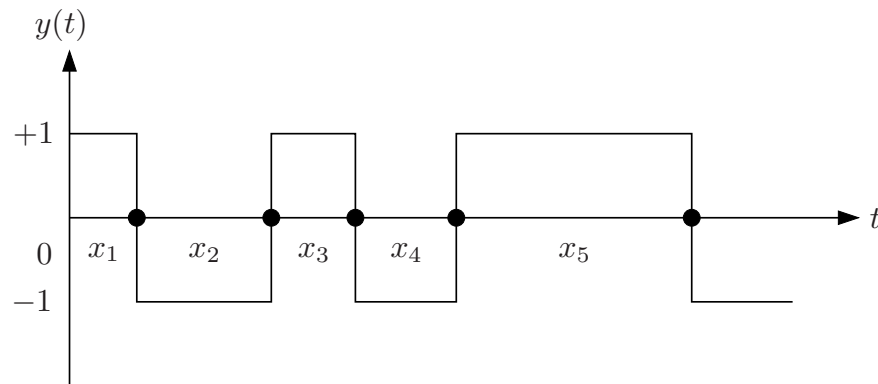
- **Arrival time process:** Let $N(t)$ be Poisson with rate λ . The arrival time process T_n , $n \geq 0$ is a discrete time process such that:
 - $T_0 = 0$
 - T_n is the arrival time of the n th event of $N(t)$
- **Interarrival time process:** Let $N(t)$ be a Poisson process with rate λ . The interarrival time process is $X_n = T_n - T_{n-1}$ for $n \geq 1$
- X_n is an IID process with $X_n \sim \text{Exp}(\lambda)$
- $T_n = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$ is an independent increment process with $T_{n_2} - T_{n_1} \sim \text{Gamma}(\lambda, n_2 - n_1)$ for $n_2 > n_1 \geq 1$, i.e.,

$$f_{T_{n_2}-T_{n_1}}(t) = \frac{\lambda^{n_2-n_1} t^{n_2-n_1-1}}{(n_2 - n_1 - 1)!} e^{-\lambda t}$$
- **Example:** Let $N_1(t)$ and $N_2(t)$ be two independent Poisson processes with rates λ_1 and λ_2 , respectively. What is the probability that $N_1(t) = 1$ before $N_2(t) = 1$?

- *Random telegraph process*: A random telegraph process $Y(t)$, $t \geq 0$, assumes values of $+1$ and -1 with $Y(0) = +1$ with probability $1/2$ and -1 with probability $1/2$, and

$Y(t)$ changes polarities with each event of a Poisson process with rate $\lambda > 0$

Sample path:



Mean and Autocorrelation Functions

- For a random vector \mathbf{X} the first and second order moments are
 - mean $\boldsymbol{\mu} = \mathbf{E}(\mathbf{X})$
 - correlation matrix $R_{\mathbf{X}} = \mathbf{E}(\mathbf{X}\mathbf{X}^T)$
- For a random process $X(t)$ the first and second order moments are
 - *mean* function: $\mu_X(t) = \mathbf{E}(X(t))$ for $t \in \mathcal{T}$
 - *autocorrelation* function: $R_X(t_1, t_2) = \mathbf{E}(X(t_1)X(t_2))$ for $t_1, t_2 \in \mathcal{T}$
- The *autocovariance function* of a random process is defined as

$$C_X(t_1, t_2) = \mathbf{E}[(X(t_1) - \mathbf{E}(X(t_1)))(X(t_2) - \mathbf{E}(X(t_2)))]$$

The autocovariance function can be expressed using the mean and autocorrelation functions as

$$C_X(t_1, t_2) = R_X(t_1, t_2) - \mu_X(t_1)\mu_X(t_2)$$

Examples

- IID process:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu_X(n) &= E(X_1) \\ R_X(n_1, n_2) &= E(X_{n_1}X_{n_2}) = \begin{cases} E(X_1^2) & n_1 = n_2 \\ (E(X_1))^2 & n_1 \neq n_2 \end{cases}\end{aligned}$$

- Random phase signal process:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu_X(t) &= E(\alpha \cos(\omega t + \Theta)) = \int_0^{2\pi} \frac{\alpha}{2\pi} \cos(\omega t + \theta) d\theta = 0 \\ R_X(t_1, t_2) &= E(X(t_1)X(t_2)) \\ &= \int_0^{2\pi} \frac{\alpha^2}{2\pi} \cos(\omega t_1 + \theta) \cos(\omega t_2 + \theta) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^{2\pi} \frac{\alpha^2}{4\pi} [\cos(\omega(t_1 + t_2) + 2\theta) + \cos(\omega(t_1 - t_2))] d\theta \\ &= \frac{\alpha^2}{2} \cos(\omega(t_1 - t_2))\end{aligned}$$

- Random walk:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu_X(n) &= E\left(\sum_{i=1}^n Z_i\right) = \sum_{i=1}^n 0 = 0 \\ R_X(n_1, n_2) &= E(X_{n_1}X_{n_2}) \\ &= E[X_{n_1}(X_{n_2} - X_{n_1} + X_{n_1})] \\ &= E(X_{n_1}^2) = n_1 \quad \text{assuming } n_2 \geq n_1 \\ &= \min\{n_1, n_2\} \quad \text{in general}\end{aligned}$$

- Poisson process:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu_N(t) &= \lambda t \\ R_N(t_1, t_2) &= E(N(t_1)N(t_2)) \\ &= E[N(t_1)(N(t_2) - N(t_1) + N(t_1))] \\ &= \lambda t_1 \times \lambda(t_2 - t_1) + \lambda t_1 + \lambda^2 t_1^2 = \lambda t_1 + \lambda^2 t_1 t_2 \quad \text{assuming } t_2 \geq t_1 \\ &= \lambda \min\{t_1, t_2\} + \lambda^2 t_1 t_2\end{aligned}$$

Gaussian Random Processes

- A Gaussian random process (GRP) is a random process $X(t)$ such that

$$[X(t_1), X(t_2), \dots, X(t_n)]^T$$

is a GRV for all $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n \in \mathcal{T}$

- Since the joint pdf for a GRV is specified by its mean and covariance matrix, a GRP is specified by its mean $\mu_X(t)$ and autocorrelation $R_X(t_1, t_2)$ functions
- Example: The discrete time WGN process is a GRP

Gauss-Markov Process

- Let $Z_n, n \geq 1$, be a WGN process, i.e., an IID process with $Z_1 \sim \mathcal{N}(0, N)$

The Gauss-Markov process is a *first-order autoregressive process* defined by

$$X_1 = Z_1$$

$$X_n = \alpha X_{n-1} + Z_n, \quad n > 1,$$

where $|\alpha| < 1$

- This process is a GRP, since $X_1 = Z_1$ and $X_k = \alpha X_{k-1} + Z_k$ where Z_1, Z_2, \dots are i.i.d. $\mathcal{N}(0, N)$,

$$\begin{bmatrix} X_1 \\ X_2 \\ X_3 \\ \vdots \\ X_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \alpha & 1 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots \\ \alpha^{n-2} & \alpha^{n-3} & \cdots & 1 & 0 \\ \alpha^{n-1} & \alpha^{n-2} & \cdots & \alpha & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} Z_1 \\ Z_2 \\ Z_3 \\ \vdots \\ Z_n \end{bmatrix}$$

is a linear transformation of a GRV and is therefore a GRV

- Clearly, the Gauss-Markov process is Markov. It is not, however, an independent increment process

- Mean and covariance functions:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu_X(n) &= E(X_n) = E(\alpha X_{n-1} + Z_n) \\ &= \alpha E(X_{n-1}) + E(Z_n) = \alpha E(X_{n-1}) = \alpha^{n-1} E(Z_1) = 0\end{aligned}$$

To find the autocorrelation function, for $n_2 > n_1$ we write

$$X_{n_2} = \alpha^{n_2-n_1} X_{n_1} + \sum_{i=0}^{n_2-n_1-1} \alpha^i Z_{n_2-i}$$

Thus

$$R_X(n_1, n_2) = E(X_{n_1} X_{n_2}) = \alpha^{n_2-n_1} E(X_{n_1}^2) + 0,$$

since X_{n_1} and Z_{n_2-i} are independent, zero mean for $0 \leq i \leq n_2 - n_1 - 1$

Next, to find $E(X_{n_1}^2)$, consider

$$E(X_1^2) = N$$

$$E(X_{n_1}^2) = E[(\alpha X_{n_1-1} + Z_{n_1})^2] = \alpha^2 E(X_{n_1-1}^2) + N$$

Thus

$$E(X_{n_1}^2) = \frac{1 - \alpha^{2n_1}}{1 - \alpha^2} N$$

Finally the autocorrelation function is

$$R_X(n_1, n_2) = \alpha^{|n_2-n_1|} \frac{1 - \alpha^{2\min\{n_1, n_2\}}}{1 - \alpha^2} N$$

- *Estimation of Gauss-Markov process:* Suppose we observe a noisy version of the Gauss-Markov process,

$$Y_n = X_n + W_n,$$

where W_n is a WGN process independent of Z_n with average power Q

We can use the Kalman filter from Lecture Notes 4 to estimate X_{i+1} from Y^i as follows:

Initialization:

$$\hat{X}_{1|0} = 0$$

$$\sigma_{1|0}^2 = N$$

Update: For $i = 2, 3, \dots$,

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{X}_{i+1|i} &= \alpha \hat{X}_{i|i-1} + k_i(Y_i - \hat{X}_{i|i-1}), \\ \sigma_{i+1|i}^2 &= \alpha(\alpha - k_i)\sigma_{i|i-1}^2 + N, \text{ where} \\ k_i &= \frac{\alpha\sigma_{i|i-1}^2}{\sigma_{i|i-1}^2 + Q}\end{aligned}$$

Substituting from the k_i equation into the MSE update equation, we obtain

$$\sigma_{i+1|i}^2 = \frac{\alpha^2 Q \sigma_{i|i-1}^2}{\sigma_{i|i-1}^2 + Q} + N,$$

This is a *Riccati recursion* (a quadratic recursion in the MSE) and has a *steady state* solution:

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{\alpha^2 Q \sigma^2}{\sigma^2 + Q} + N$$

Solving this quadratic equation, we obtain

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{N - (1 - \alpha^2)Q + \sqrt{4NQ + (N - (1 - \alpha^2)Q)^2}}{2}$$

The Kalman gain k_i converges to

$$k = \frac{-N - (1 - \alpha^2)Q + \sqrt{4NQ + (N - (1 - \alpha^2)Q)^2}}{2\alpha Q}$$

and the steady-state Kalman filter is

$$\hat{X}_{i+1|i} = \alpha \hat{X}_{i|i-1} + k(Y_i - \hat{X}_{i|i-1})$$